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CIA Aided Area Police

Washington-area police departments in recent years have received special CIA training in surveillance techniques, surreptitious entry, lockpicking and use of explosives and were lent CIA equipment, according to documents the agency has released.

CIA Gave Area Police Training and Gear

By Karen DeYoung

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Washington-area police departments got special CIA training in the late 1960s and early 1970s in surveillance techniques, surreptitious entry, lockpicking and use of explosives and were lent CIA equipment, according to documents the agency has released.

Police in the District of Columbia and Alexandria as well as in Fairfax, Arlington, Prince George's and Montgomery counties apparently were given special access to CIA training and equipment because of "the need to combat the tangible threats posed by radical terrorist groups within their jurisdiction," according to one CIA document released to The Washington Post under a Freedom of Information Act request.

Although the agency, in various interoffice memorandums, said such activities were legal under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, the large-scale training of local police apparently was discontinued in 1973 because of widespread publicity surrounding its disclosures. However, under its charter, the CIA is prohibited from engaging in domestic law enforcement activities.

In a Sept. 7, 1972, memorandum to then-CIA Director Richard Helms, CIA security director Howard J. Osborn recommended discontinuing some of the police training until the Watergate issue had died down. "If you approve," the memo stated, "I would like to continue these courses (in covert photography and 'locks and picks') quietly and discreetly."

"All police representatives attending are given a strong briefing on the agency's passion for anonymity, and I know that you know that our friendly police departments have always respected this, and we have never had a leak of any kind."

"I have some reservations about offering them a basic course in audio surveillance at this time," Osborn said. "If you agree, we can defer his aspect of police training to some future date after the Watergate incident has been put to bed one way or another."

In December, 1972, The New York Times published an article outlining CIA training of members of the New York City police force. The Rockefeller commission report, released last June, disclosed that in addition to CIA training of police in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles,

San Francisco and Miami, the agency also had conducted classes and seminars for officers and officials of local Washington-area police departments.

The newly obtained documents, giving specific dates and circumstances surrounding training of local police, were initially requested six months ago by The Washington Star, which the last two days has published information contained in the documents. The identical documents were released yesterday to The Washington Post.

At least one local police official, Arlington Chief Roy C. McLaren, has been requested by the House Select Intelligence Committee to provide information concerning the relationship of his department with the CIA. In

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